

VZCZCXRO7386

OO RUEHBC RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDE RUEHKUK RUEHLH RUEHPW RUEHROV
DE RUEHNE #3164/01 3511206
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 161206Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4726
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE
RUCNNSG/NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS GROUP COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7252
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 5696
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2974
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 1459
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5986
RUEHSI/AMEMBASSY TBILISI 0055
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 7367
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 8026
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 NEW DELHI 003164

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/INS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/15/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PK](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MUST ACT: SENATOR KERRY HEARS FROM HOME
MINISTER CHIDAMBARAM

Classified By: Ambassador Mulford for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

¶1. (C) Summary: Senator Kerry and Indian Home Minister P. Chidambaram discussed the state of Indo-Pak relations at a 30 minute December 15 meeting. The Home Minister stated that recent GOP actions against Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and other terrorist groups in Pakistan were not sufficient in the GOI's eyes, nor would they pass muster with the Indian public. He also rejected claims that fast and decisive action against terrorist groups by the GOP would outrage Pakistani civil society. On the Mumbai attacks specifically, Chidambaram firmly believes Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) provided training and coordination due to the attack's precision and sophistication, though he did not offer concrete evidence when pressed. He termed Pakistan President Zardari "weak" and Army Chief Kayani a "hardliner." Chidambaram believes Kayani has the power to turn off large scale terrorism from Pakistan, and asked Senator Kerry for the U.S. to extract a pledge from Kayani for no terrorism in India for six to twelve months. Stating that no Indian government could survive another attack like Mumbai, the Home Minister reaffirmed that war was not an option, but that the Indian public is demanding action. End Summary.

Pak Must Put an End to Terrorism

¶2. (C) Senator Kerry asked Home Minister Chidambaram about the challenges India now faces post Mumbai. Chidambaram stated unequivocally that ample evidence exists to prove that the ten "boys" who attacked Mumbai were "recruited, trained, armed, and sent from Pakistan." Referring to fingerprint and DNA evidence and recent media interviews with the father of the lone surviving suspected terrorist, Chidambaram said it was futile for Pakistan to further deny the origin of the terrorists. The only course for the GOP is to assure the world they will put an end to the infrastructure of terrorism within Pakistan.

¶3. (C) The Home Minister dismissed recent actions by the GOP to ban certain groups, detain individuals or seal offices.

"What is house arrest?" Chidambaram scoffed. He did not believe these actions would pass muster with the Indian people. Chidambaram told Senator Kerry India is willing to give the U.S. some space to talk to Pakistan, but that the Indian public wants action.

¶4. (C) Senator Kerry asked what the GOI would consider an "adequate response" from Pakistan, how to elicit such a response and how fast he thought the GOP could move without stirring resentment within Pakistani civil society. Chidambaram rejected the idea that Pakistani civil society would oppose fast action against terrorist groups in Pakistan and termed it a fiction of the GOP so they could go slow. Average Pakistanis, Chidambaram insisted, do not want to export terror to India.

¶5. (C) When asked by Senator Kerry what the minimum response India needed, the Home Minister responded that India needs a pledge from President Zardari and Army Chief Kayani not to export terror for six to twelve months. Chidambaram believes General Kayani can shut down LeT, and that the Mumbai attacks were not perpetrated by "rogue" elements of the terrorist group. He accepted that Kayani may not be able to stop "low-grade" bombings. But he firmly believes the Mumbai attackers had ISI help and/or coordination because of the year and a half planning, the sophisticated equipment and the military precision of the attack. The Home Minister acknowledged that Indian security lapses were also to blame for failing to connect the dots and prevent the attacks.

NEW DELHI 00003164 002 OF 003

¶6. (C) What would happen if passions don't cool, Senator Kerry asked. Chidambaram restated India's position that war is not an option, but that, "We have to protect our people." No Indian government, the Home Minister observed, would survive another attack like Mumbai. He termed the current GOI "moderate" and said, "We are pleading with the world to control Pakistan." Senator Kerry asked if an indigenous terrorist group could perpetrate and act such as Mumbai with an eye towards taking down the government. Chidambaram did not think it likely that an indigenous suicidal jihadi group existed.

Assessment of Pakistan

¶7. (C) Senator Kerry asked Chidambaram for his assessment of Pakistan's civilian and military leadership. Chidambaram termed Zardari "weak" and Kayani a "hardliner" who was an "ISI graduate" and close to former President Musharraf. As for the Pakistan Army, Chidambaram accepted that it is the most powerful institution in Pakistan. He did not think it was "transformable" or could be "wished away." At best he thought it could be "dealt with" and hopefully become something akin to the militaries in Turkey or Thailand.

¶8. (C) Chidambaram further stated that there exists two general sentiments within the Pakistani Army - Punjabi officers and those officers sympathetic to fundamental Islam - neither of which feel comfortable fighting in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP). In order to get out of fighting in the NWFP, they have tried to pull India into a trap on the Indo-Pak border, he argued. "But we are not likely to fall into that border trap," the Home Minister concluded. When pressed if he thought anyone could deal with the tribal problems in the NWFP, Chidambaram said he did not think so, "Only a very strong leader perhaps," but he saw none on the political landscape. Concluding on Afghanistan, Chidambaram told Senator Kerry that India supports U.S. efforts. "We are on the side of Karzai," he stated.

Continued Cooperation

¶9. (C) Senator Kerry then asked what more the U.S. could do to help India fight terror. He offered that the post attack investigation provided the U.S. and India a tremendous opportunity to expand law enforcement and intelligence cooperation. The Home Minister agreed and responded that he was very interested in the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center and hoped to take the best lessons of the U.S. experience from the creation of the Department of Homeland Security. Ambassador Mulford assured the Home Minister that the upcoming visit by the Director of National Intelligence would greatly illuminate the overall U.S. counterterrorism structure. Chidambaram told the Ambassador and Senator Kerry that a new law to fight terror would be introduced, and passed, in the current Parliamentary session. However, he acknowledged that due to the fact that law and order is a state responsibility in India, it would take time to implement and for the bureaucracy to adjust.

¶10. (C) Ambassador Mulford asked if regulation of hawala finance would be part of the new legislation. The Home Minister said that fighting terrorism financing would be addressed, but that it was more difficult to institute certain regulations, again due to India's federal structure. On the Financial Action Task Force, the former Finance Minister said, "We want to comply...we are nearly there."

¶11. (U) CODEL Kerry did not clear this message.

NEW DELHI 00003164 003 OF 003

MULFORD